



## Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

# Proposed Fishing Regulation Changes – 2018

April 5, 2018

*Note: new language is in italics. Deleted language is indicated by strikethrough.*

### CENTRAL DISTRICT

CHANGE – page 73

#### **RED ROCK CREEK (Beaverhead River drainage)**

- Open entire year except May 15 through June 14.
- Cutthroat Trout: ~~5 daily and in possession, no size limit.~~ *No harvest of Cutthroat Trout.*
- *Artificial lures only.*

ADD

#### **CULVER POND (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)**

- *Closed to angling from November 30 to April 15.*
- *Artificial lures only.*

#### **ELK SPRINGS CREEK (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)**

- *Closed to angling from May 15 to June 15.*
- *Artificial lures only.*

#### **WIDGEON POND (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)**

- *Closed to angling from November 30 to April 15.*
- *Artificial lures only.*

**Public Comments:** Public comment was accepted from April 23 to May 23, with 10 comments via the FWP website. No comments were received via U.S. Mail. Comments for the proposed changes were evenly split, with 4 in favor of the proposed changes and 4 opposed. Two comments did not specifically support or oppose, but implied opposition. Reasons for opposing the proposal included lack of justification by USFWS, limiting public fishing opportunity, ineffectiveness of previous regulation changes, and inconsistencies with fish management in other waters in SW Montana. Supporters favored preserving spawning Cutthroat Trout and Arctic Grayling. Uncommitted commenters questioned if the change was based on data, and why catch and release regulations are proposed for non-native species.

#### **FWP Response to Comments:**

The Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge requested FWP to submit the proposed regulation changes to Red Rock Creek, Culver Pond, Elk Springs Creek, and Widgeon Pond. FWP staff do not expect the proposed Red Rock Creek regulation change to

influence Arctic Grayling populations on the refuge. FWP staff expect the Elk Springs Creek regulation will reduce the likelihood of trampling of Arctic Grayling eggs. FWP staff expect that the proposed Culver and Widgeon Ponds regulations will have minimal fisheries impacts, as these regulations were proposed to minimize waterfowl disturbance.